

Interdisciplinary Lesson Plans for a Successful Launch

Strategies to help you successfully launch your *Career Choices* course with 15 interactive, interdisciplinary sessions, thereby setting a rigorous tone for your entire course.

The fifteen sessions outlined in this document are the *gold standard* for launching your students into not only their *Career Choices* course, but also into a successful, self-sufficient life.

Studies clearly show that adolescents that can project into the future and understand the consequences of their choices today are far less likely to become teen parents, drop out of school, or become substance abusers. In addition, individuals who learn to develop a vision and a plan for what is possible are far more successful in life. However, too few adolescents have any practice with envisioning their future.

Using this lesson plan during the first few weeks of your course—along with the *Workbook and Portfolio*, activities in the *Instructor’s Guide*, and readings from *Possibilities*—you’ll provide a rich interdisciplinary experience for your students. You’ll stretch even the most resistant student to think beyond their typical “next Saturday” timeframe and learn the important skills of long-range thinking and envisioning. In addition, you’ll provide activities for a variety of learning styles grounded in academics.

You’ll want to be sure to read through the following plans completely before beginning your course, as there will be some prep required for particular activities.

As you review these lessons, you’ll need to have the following close at hand:

- Your *Career Choices* textbooks
- A computer with Internet access

Review the material found on the pages noted (whether in *Career Choices*, the *Instructor’s Guide*, or one of the optional supplements), as that information will not be included in this document. And, make sure that you are registered for any of the enhancing sites that you plan to implement—www.careerchoices.com, www.lifestylemath.com, www.my10yearplan.com, and The Teachers’ Lounge (www.teachersloungecc.com).

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact Tanja Easson, Vice President of Curriculum and Technical Support, at (800) 967-8016 or by email at tanja@academicinnovations.com. She’ll happily brainstorm strategies with you.

And, please remember, we are here to support you throughout the school year, not just during the first few weeks.

Session 1

Lesson/Activity: Pre-class survey; the last half of the class session should be the instructor's own introduction to the course.

Instructor's Guide: pages 6/10-6/17

Special Directions: After you've made your introductions, have each student complete the pre-class survey found on page 6/14 of the *Instructor's Guide*. You'll collect the completed surveys for comparison with the post-class surveys students will complete at the end of the course. This survey will measure the change students' attitudes undergo regarding the value of education and their future self-sufficiency and productivity.

If your students are going to be using www.My10yearPlan.com, you'll want to consider having them take this survey online. This will make scoring the results easier.

Visit http://www.My10yearPlan.com/overview_demo.html for an online demonstration of this site. If you want a personalized tour of this website, contact our office at (800) 967-8016.

Session 2

Textbook: *Career Choices*, pages 6-7

Lesson/Activity: Introduction

Instructor's Guide: page 4/2, Presentation suggestions

Special Directions: Before reading the text, ask students to partner up with another student and decide what they would bring back to class if they were given the assignment "*Bring something that flies*". Student teams will record their ideas on a piece of paper. Have each team report out to the class.

Then, have students read from pages 6-7 of the *Career Choices* textbook.

In your discussion, you'll want to emphasize the last paragraph of the introduction:

It's not the purpose of the course to make a final career choice. Students will, however, learn a PROCESS for making rewarding choices in the future.

If you have time, complete the nametag activity listed under **Activities** in the *Instructor's Guide*.

Homework: Ask students to bring magazines or graphics that match their vision of their future to the next class session.

Session 3

Textbook: *Career Choices Workbook/Portfolio*

Lesson/Activity: A graphic depiction of their future.

Instructor's Guide: Review pages 2/5-2/6 of the *Instructor's Guide*

Special Directions: Hand out the *Career Choices Workbook/Portfolio*. Have students decorate their *Workbook/Portfolio* with a pictures and graphics of how they envision their future. They can create a dust jacket on a piece of sturdy paper (approximately 21" x 11") or decorate the cover itself.

You'll make the assignment the day before, so students know to bring in magazines, printouts, or photos they find particularly interesting. If you have the opportunity to have computer lab access, students should have no trouble finding graphics online that match their future vision.

Emphasize that their *Workbook/Portfolio* will become a treasured document that they keep, update, and share. They'll want to keep it with their photo albums, baby books, and other treasured scrapbooks. Then their product will have more meaning and, therefore, they are more likely to value and work more diligently on its contents.

Optional: If your students are going to be using www.My10yearPlan.com, now would be a good time to have them go online and review this resource, if time permits.

For detailed information on how to set up student accounts, login to The Teachers' Lounge, click on "Online Training Modules," and review the tutorials related to www.My10yearPlan.com. If you haven't already signed up for The Teachers' Lounge, contact our office at (800) 967-8016.

Session 4

Textbook: *Career Choices*, pages 10-13; *Workbook/Portfolio*, page 5

Lesson/Activity: Vision + Energy = Success

Instructor's Guide: page 4/4, Presentation suggestions

Special Directions: Ask students to read each of the stories found on pages 10-11 of the *Career Choices* textbook. The instructor should read the text on page 12 aloud.

As a class, brainstorm what Michael Jordan's *Vision, Actions in School*, and *Actions at Work* MIGHT have been.

This is an ideal time to review the "rules" of brainstorming with your students. You will be doing a lot of brainstorming throughout this class, and it's important to establish and enforce the ground rules from the very beginning. See page 6/23 of the *Instructor's Guide*. (You'll probably want to review this entire section—pages 6/23-6/35—prior to starting your course.)

After discussing the topics listed on page 4/4 of the *Instructor's Guide*, ask students to break into pairs and complete page 5 in their *Workbook/Portfolio*.

Login to The Teachers' Lounge, click on "Online Training Modules", and (under "Classroom Management Techniques") select "Strategies for Creating Motivated Learners". Choose "Tips and Ideas to Create an Involved Learner" and watch the video podcast. These ideas and tips will be helpful throughout your course.

Session 5

Textbook: *Possibilities*, pages 11-17

Lesson/Activity: "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" by James Thurber

Special Directions: Have students read this story silently to themselves.

If you want to read the piece aloud and you are working with a population that can "handle it", you may want to make assignments a day or two before, giving certain students different sections to read, making changes in the reader as the scenes change.

Follow-up/Discussion Questions: 5, 6, 8

Discuss questions 5 and 8 as a class. Ask students to write their own dialogue for question 6. They will use their dialogue during the next session (see question 7).

Session 6

Textbook: *Career Choices Workbook/Portfolio*, page 6; *Possibilities*, page 17

Lesson/Activity: Envisioning Your Future

Instructor's Guide: page 4/6

Special Directions: This is a very important activity; you'll want to give students plenty of in-class time to complete it. By now, they've had practice in "envisioning" and projecting into the future. They will use the dialogue they wrote during Session 5 as a prompt.

If you have time, ask students to volunteer to read their essays to the class. This will help build a team spirit, as students get to know each others hopes, dreams, and goals. If students know each others goals (and they will be evolving over the course), they are more likely to be supportive and connected.

Be aware: At this point in the course, this will be a difficult assignment for many. You'll use this assignment as an evaluation tool. Take a look at the creative approach taken by Madeline Noakes at Patrick Henry High School (page 6/11 of the *Instructor's Guide*). If you have the video/digital recording resources, you may want to do the same. Just imagine showing the

resulting videos to school improvement committees, school boards, and parents at the end of the school year. Students may even want to put them on YouTube.

Optional: www.My10yearPlan.com. The essay students just completed is the first product they may want to incorporate into the online Portfolio section of www.My0yearPlan.com. If you have time and computer lab access, you may want to have them do this right away, so they get an idea of how this tool will work.

Session 7

Lesson/Activity: “Visualizer” activity

Instructor’s Guide: page 4/7; The Teachers’ Lounge Resource Cupboard

Special Directions: If you’ve attended one of our two-day workshops, you’re familiar with the impact of this activity. Designed by Linda Paulson, an English/Language Arts teacher in Grafton, North Dakota, it a very popular activity that starts with simple coat hangers and morphs into very elaborate contraptions, decorated with bits of craft materials.



If you don’t have enough materials to allow each student to make their own visualizer, divide your students into teams of three. Allow enough time at the end of the class for each student or team to model their design for the class and explain why they designed it the way they did.

Samples created in a two-day workshop in South Carolina.

http://www.careerchoices.com/lounge/cupboard_visualizer.html

Session 8

Textbook: *Possibilities*, page 24

Lesson/Activity: “Dreams” by Langston Hughes; *October Sky* (movie)

Special Directions: Open the class with the poem “Dreams” by Langston Hughes. Discuss or write about the Journal Entry question at the top of page 24 and Question 3 on page 25.

Then show the outstanding movie *October Sky*. *October Sky* is a wonderful true story that illustrates a dream and a vision of the future. It’s worth going to the effort to get the necessary equipment into your room. It is 108 minutes long so you’ll show part of it this class session and the balance the next day.

The movie is readily available on DVD through a service like NetFlix, your local library, or video rental store. (You might want to check at the beginning of your course to see if any of your students belong to a service like NetFlix. If so, arrange for them to have a copy at this time. NetFlix is very responsive and, once a request is made, you can have the in three or four days.)

Instructor’s Guide: You’ll want to review the information on the Video Book Club on pages 6/41 and 6/46.

Session 9

Special Directions: Show the balance of the movie *October Sky*.

Once you’ve completed the movie, break into groups of two or three students. Have the groups complete a chart similar to the one found on page 13 of their *Workbook and Portfolio* for each of the main characters.

Optional Online Enhancements: If you want to extend some of the discussion from the movie, you might want to visit the web site maintained by Homer Hickam; visit www.homerhickam.com. In fact, the **Ninth Annual October Sky Festival** is coming up on October 6, 2007, which will also celebrate the 50th anniversary of Sputnik. You can get details at www.homerhickam.com/coalwood/.

Session 10

Textbook: *Career Choices*, pages 15-16; *Workbook/Portfolio*, page 7

Lesson/Activity: Why People Work and Everyone Works

Instructor’s Guide: pages 4/8-4/9

Special Directions:

Begin by brainstorming the question “Why do people work?” Are your students able to come up with most of the reasons listed in *Career Choices*? Did they come up with different ones?

Now, have students read the text, then discuss each concept in more detail. As you discuss each characteristic, ask students if they can identify anyone—known to them or famous—who demonstrates that trait.

If you have time, have students complete the activity on page 7 in the *Workbook/Portfolio*. Otherwise, assign it as homework and ask students to share their thoughts the next day.

Session 11

Textbook: *Workbook/Portfolio*, pages 125-126

Lesson/Activity: Career Portfolio Notebook

Instructor’s Guide: pages 4/13-4/14

Special Directions: Each student will need a three-ring notebook with a two- to three-inch spine and a packet of tabbed notebook dividers. (A one-inch spine will probably suffice for their first year of use, if cost is a factor.) Ideally, each student will bring their own notebook, but if you have the funds in your budget and you can provide them, most warehouse or “big box” stores, such as Costco, will stock binders in bulk.

If you don’t have funding, why not approach a community service organization (e.g., Rotary or Kiwanis)? For details and strategies, see pages 10/1-10/5 of the *Instructor’s Guide*.

Each student’s Career Portfolio Notebook will be used throughout the course and, ideally, throughout their life. Review the process with students and create a vision of what this can do for them and how it can look. The essays written from page 14 of the *Workbook* could be the first “work product” they include in their Career Portfolio Notebook.

You might be asking yourself, “Why not just use www.my10yearplan.com as a digital portfolio—particularly in today’s world?” The following is an excerpt taken from one of our new online training modules:

There are two ways to approach the Career Portfolio Notebook project.

The first is to follow the directions found on pages 4/13- 4/14 in the Career Choices Instructor’s Guide. This outlines how students would compile their notebook, without using the digital documents from My10yearPlan.com.

The second is using the optional My10yearPlan.com. My10yearPlan.com supports the development of hardcopy, notebook-based portfolios, making the process more efficient and comprehensive because all students have to do is printout each of their activities or stored documents, each time they update them and include or replace them in the appropriate section of their notebooks.

As you make your choice, it's important to note that students do not need to have a hardcopy notebook of their data if they are using My10yearPlan.com. The information needed is all saved digitally. And, because many of the products on the market for student planning are only digital, you might be tempted to think that is enough.

We strongly suggest that for most students the tactile notebook provides a learning opportunity that is easier for them to manage. A hardcopy notebook is an easier format to share with others, be it parents, peers, mentors, interviewers, or employers.

But, more importantly, the act of creating and updating their notebook is motivational. It's a book about their lives, hopes, and dreams. By flipping through their ever-expanding document, your students will get a sense of accomplishment. They'll experience growth in a quantitative format, and that is empowering.

Session 12

Textbook: *Career Choices*, pages 18-19; *Workbook/Portfolio* pages 8-9

Lesson/Activity: Defining Success

Instructor's Guide: page 4/10

Special Directions: Have students read the description at the top of page 18 of the *Career Choices* main textbook. Follow the directions explained in the *Instructor's Guide* on page 4/10. These are important discussions. You may want to read each quote, discuss its meaning, and pause so students can mark their response in their *Workbook/Portfolio* on pages 8-9.

Session 13

Textbook: *Career Choices*, pages 20-21

Lesson/Activity: Making Career Choices

Special Directions: Ask different students to read the description for different types of decision makers. Briefly discuss these different types as you go along. Can anyone in the class identify with any of these types? By now, if you've followed the recommendations found on pages 6/23-6/29 of the *Instructor's Guide*, your students should feel safe sharing some of their shortcomings with the group.

In a hat, put a slip of paper with name and explanation of type, but leave Kenisha out of the hat. Ask teams of students (groups of three is advisable at this point) to draw a name. Give your groups 10 minutes to work up a skit that demonstrates this decision making personality type AND the opposite decision making type. As you make the assignment, ask groups to imagine that their character has completed a *Career Choices* course and that their character changes because they understand the errors of their ways and how that will impact their future happiness

and success. This is the second characterization in their skit. What does that changed behavior look like?

Parameters: They must keep each of the two skits to one minute. Think of it as a 60-second commercial for decision making.

Ask each group to act out each of the two personality types in front of the class. At the end, ask the class to identify as a whole what was common among the second one.

Session 14

Textbook: *Possibilities*, pages 37-38

Lesson/Activity: “Richard Cory” by Edwin Arlington Robinson

Instructor’s Guide:

Special Directions: If you have access to the song “Richard Cory” by Simon and Garfunkel, you might want to use it as a “Song of the Day.” (See Sharon Hurwitz’s suggestion at the bottom of page 4/12 in the *Instructor’s Guide*.)

Start the session off by asking students to respond to the Journal Entry prompt found at the top of page 37. You can do this in writing or as a class discussion.

Have students read the poem “Richard Cory”.

As a class, discuss question 5 and list the examples on the board.

Ask each student to complete the Defining Success activity in the *Workbook/Portfolio* on page 9.

Important point: Assure them that the definition of success is an individual one—no one else can define success for you. However, their own definition of success will probably be an evolving one, changing not just throughout this course but throughout their lives. Encourage them to use pencils when writing in their *Workbook/Portfolio*.

If you have a student population that can “handle it”, assign as homework the essay from question 4 on page 38 of *Possibilities*, writing the last entry in Richard Cory’s diary.

Session 15

Lesson/Activity: Guest Speaker (a panel or individual speaking on their definition of success)

Instructor’s Guide: pages 6/36-6/40

Special Directions: We all know that reality TV is the hottest thing in the last decade. YouTube and social networking sites are now mainstream for millions. What is it about **reality** that touches each of us so deeply?

That is why we recommend this guest speaker opportunity as the culmination of this chapter before launching into the content rich areas of your *Career Choices* course. We know it is difficult to get guest speakers, but your efforts will pay off, perhaps even change one of your students' lives.

Suggestions for types of speakers to look for:

- Successfully retired individuals

- A person who gave up an opulent lifestyle to do something meaningful

- Physically-challenged individual who has persevered

- Individuals who overcame adversity

- Individuals who are successful mixing career and family

Topic for your speakers: How do you define success and what life experiences lead you to this?

Shortly after this experience, you'll want to ask students to review their own success statement and edit or update, if appropriate.

Congratulations! You're ready to take it from here. We hope that you'll continue on in this interdisciplinary format, emphasizing active-learning for a variety of learning styles.

Consult The Teachers' Lounge for lesson planning ideas and spreadsheets. And please remember to share with us your great classroom ideas. Most of the extension ideas have come from our *Career Choices* instructor's over the years.